Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Ministry of Health and Farmily Welfare has already issued a notification inviting comments from public to amend the standards of Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act Rules, 1955.

Sale of subsidised food commodities in open market in Sikkim

1593. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the CBI has investigated the case of sale of subsidized food commodities in open market provided to Sikkim by the FCI;

(b) whether it is a fact that six State Governments employees of the Food and Civil Supplies Department are also involved;

(c) if so, what action has been taken to prosecute them in the court of law by the CBI; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the involved officials of the FCI only are facing trial in a court in Sikkim and the involved State Government employees in the same racket are moving freely?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. CBI has investigated the case of sale of subsidized food commodities in open market provided to Sikkim by the FCI and registered a case (R.C. No. 23/98) in this matter. In the investigation, complicity of five FCI employees and six employees of Food and Civil Supply Department of State Govt. of Sikkim has been, *prima-facie*, established. All the eleven accused were arrested for offences under P.C. Act 1988.

Food Policy

1594. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Government's Food Policy gets a reality check from

States' appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated the 11th January, 2003; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to fix responsibility for non-implementation of food policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government makes available foodgrains to the State Governments/UTs for distribution under TPDS and other welfare schemes, such as, Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Sampoorna Gramin Rozgaar Yojana, Mid-day Meal Scheme, Food for Work Programme. The responsibility of implementing these schemes is with the State Governments/UT Administrations.

Starvation deaths

1595. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Public Hearing on Hunger reveals many are still dieing without food" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated the 11th January, 2003;

(b) the existing schemes to tackle such situations; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to prevent such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. To ensure the availability of foodgrains to the public at affordable prices, particularly to the people Below the Poverty Line (BPL), Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) was launched.

In December, 2002, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) was launched wherein beneficiaries have been identified and are being supplied foodgrains at the most affordable price, *i.e.*, rice @ Rs. 3/-per kg. and